I Appoint *Thomas Newcomb*, and *Henry Hills*, to Print this Information, According to the Order of the HOUSE of COMMONS; And that no other Perſon preſume to Print the ſame. *Novemb.* 10th 1680.

Wi WILLIAMS, *Speaker.*

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Wi WILLIAMS, *Speaker.*

# THE INFORMATION OF Stephen Dugdale, GENT.

Delivered at the BAR of the HOUSE of COMMONS, Monday the First day of November, In the Year of our Lord 1680.

*Perused and Signed to be Printed, according to the Order of the House of Commons,*

*By me* WILLIAM WILLIAMS, *Speaker.*

*LONDON*,
Printed by the Assigns of *John Bill*, *Thomas Newcomb*, and *Henry Hills*, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty. 1680.

THE

# INFORMATION

Given at the

# BARR

of the Honourable the

# Houſe of Commons;

BY

# Mr. Stephen Dugdale;

On the 30th day of *October*, *Anno Dom.* 1680. *viz.*

THAT about two or three and twenty years ſince, I was brought over from the Church of *England* to the Church of *Rome*, by one Mr. *Knight* a Prieſt, continuing ſome years under his care, till at length he the ſaid Mr. *Knight*, through infirmity of body, not being able to Officiate his

Prieſtly Function, he delivered me to the care of one *Francis Evers* a Jeſuit, who did not only take care to inſtruct me in matters relating to a future State, as to a future State, but in all things as far as he could in temporal things. Likewiſe he the ſaid Mr. *Evers* laid an injunction upon me to viſit him every day once, if I was at home: and ſo by ſuch means we grew to ſuch an intimacy, that ſcarcely any thing that the one knew, but the other was privy to it. So that ſometimes as we were talking of affairs of State, and the Revolutions of Governments, we came to diſcourſe of our own. And he the ſaid *Evers* often hath told me, that it would not be long before we might expect good times, for the Duke of *York* having declared himſelf to be a *Roman Catholick*, had given a good aſſurance to the Pope; beſides he was a Prince of that reſolution and worth, that if ever he made any ingagement, he would never revoke it, particularly in ſo high a Concern as this, where his Soul lies at ſtake. So that never more Hopes than now of diſperſing the dark Clouds of Hereſie. He hath not only engaged himſelf ſolemnly to us for the Eſtabliſhing of Religion, but that he would reſtore Us to all our Church Lands, and other Priviledges taken from the Church formerly. And this I had not from Mr. *Evers* alone, but from ſeveral private Gentlemen, beſides Prieſts. For my great intimacy with Mr. *Evers* did get me great acquaintance with moſt of the Gentry of our Religion. So by that means I came with ſeveral of them to their private Meetings, where it had been debated, what the Duke of *York*'s pleaſure was, that as he had given them an Aſſurance of his Part, they ſhould not be negligent to do theirs. And that they ſhould be in all readineſs with all

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neceſſaries when the King ſhould dye, to aſſiſt the Duke againſt the Proteſtants. For they muſt expect ſome oppoſition from the Proteſtant Party: but good Care before-hand might prevent a great deal of Miſchief, and that it was thought fit that every Landlord amongſt his Tenants and Servants have ſome twenty, ſome thirty, ſome fourty Catholicks, and the Prieſt to inſtruct them, That they ſhould be ready at an hours warning, and this was the courſe reſolved upon. And that the ſaid *Evers* told me, that there had been great care taken for an honeſt Gentleman to be Confeſſor to the Duke of *York*, and they had found one, a friend to the ſaid *Evers*, who was a worthy honeſt Gentleman, one Mr. *Moumford*, otherwiſe called *Beddingfeild*. He was preſented to the Duke ſometime before the *Dutch* Wars, and was with the Duke, being his Ghoſtly Father, in the *Dutch* Wars on Shipboard. Mr. *Evers* hath ſhewed me Letters from him dated from on Shipboard, commending the Duke, how good and zealous he was in the *Roman Catholick* Religion: he thought him to be the hopefulleſt and zealouſeſt Prince in the whole Univerſe. I ſaw in one of thoſe Letters from on Shipboard to Mr. *Evers*, that he the ſaid *Beddingfeild* had given the Duke the bleſſed Hoſt twice, in order for the Engaging himſelf with the Enemy. That in the year 1677. Mr. *Evers* and I being in diſcourſe, Mr. *Evers* told me, There were great fears and jealouſies, that the King would outlive the Duke of *York*, and then all our hopes were at an end. But to prevent that, he told me, that Cardinal *Howard* had ſent a Letter, that they had Excommunicated the King as an Heretick, that he was depoſed from being King, and that any One that killed him might merit by

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it. That he maintained a Damnable Heretical Doctrine; and ſo conſequently was an Enemy of Chriſt. At this time I had all the Letters directed to me for the carrying on this Plot, which were for Mr. *Evers*, ſome of which I opened and read, which all tended to lay hold of this Opportunity; for if they miſſed this Point, they muſt never look to have the like again for the Eſtabliſhing of their Religion. And about the Month of *July* or *Auguſt* 1677. ſoon after I was by Mr. *Evers* admitted into the ſecret of the Deſign for the Romiſh Government, there came one *Carrington* to *Tixall*, whom the Jeſuits thereabouts imployed as a Meſſenger of Truſt in their Buſineſs. He brought a Letter to Mr. *Evers* from Mr. *Vavaſor*, who was then at *Wolverhampton* or *Boſcobell*, and meeting me in the Hall, deſired me to give it to Mr. *Evers*, which I preſently did. The Letter from Mr. *Vavaſor* did incloſe in it ſeveral others, as one from *John Grove* in *London*, who in a part of the ſheet of Paper writ ſome News in ſhort; but underneath his ſigning Mr. *William Harcourt* began a long Account, how he lately had received the two encloſed Letters, one of them from St. *Omers*, which was ſigned by *Monfort*, *Warner*, and *Peters*, as I remember, and four more whoſe names I remember not at all. And this Letter did refer to another Letter from *Paris*, to the three Parties firſt named, and the ſame was ſigned from *Paris* by two names, whereof I think *Clifford* was one. This Letter did contain the Opinion and Advice of thoſe at *Paris*, upon a Letter which it ſeems had been firſt writ from *England* to St. *Omers*, and from St. *Omers* tranſmitted to them. The ſcope of which Advice was this, That by all means

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care ſhould be taken not to let any Arms appear, or any appear in Arms till after the Death of the KING, becauſe they had fully conſidered, that when any ſudden Death ſhould befall the KING, it might be eaſily laid to the Presbyterians, who had killed the late KING, and were ſtill Enemies to the KING and Government. Therefore they adviſed, that all ways ſhould be taken to give out and poſſeſs the People before-hand, that the Presbyterians were the only Enemies, ſo that when the KING ſhould be killed, thoſe of the Church of *ENGLAND* would preſently be incenſed, and take up Arms to Revenge it, and rather crave the Aid of the Catholicks, than be afraid of them: And therefore it was fit they ſhould be in a Readineſs to make the firſt Alarm, and give out, that all was done by the Presbyterians, and then by a little Aſſiſtance from abroad the Work would eaſily be compaſſed. This was the ſubſtance of the Letter from *Paris*: and they did further deſire to have the ſame ſent into *England*, with the Opinion of thoſe of St. *Omers* upon it; and thoſe of St. *Omers* did in their Letter much praiſe the Advice from *Paris*, adding nothing elſe of their own unto it, beſides Commendation, but paſſed unto other of ſmaller concerns, as, that one Mr. *Evers* ſhould call to one *Gerard* of *Lancaſhire*, and *Gerald* of *Hilderſon* for fifty pound due for teaching of their Children or Relations there, and ſuch like things.

Maſter *Harcourt* further added, that this Letter from Saint *Omers* being directed unto him, he had Communicated it, as alſo that from *Paris*, unto Maſter *Bedingfield*, and Maſter *Ireland*, and likewiſe to the Lord *Arundell*, Lord *Bellaſis*, Lord *Stafford*, and ſix or ſeven more whom I have forgot, by all whom it was highly commended as good Advice, and that

all ſhould endeavour upon any Differences in Parliament, or any other Diſorders, ſtill to give out, That it was thoſe Blood-ſucking, King-killing Presbyterians, that were the Authors of it.

That Maſter *Evers* did ſhew them the ſaid three Letters ſent from Maſter *Harcourt*, and then ſoon after, the ſame day, ſent them by the ſame Meſſenger *Carrington*, under a cover to Miſtreſs *Heveningham* at *Aſton*, to be ſhewn to her Husband, and to Sir *James Symonds* their Son-in-law, and to come back that night with the ſame Letters, as he did; for that I did ſee *Evers* ſhew them to the preſent Lord *Aſton* in the Parlour after Supper, his Lordſhip having been abroad before, and he believes them to be the ſame Letters he had ſeen in the morning: for the Meſſenger was then come back, and two of the Letters lay by on the Table, and the third they were reading by the fire. And I do verily believe they were the ſame Hands, and the ſame Letters, and the Meſſenger was there detained all Night, and made much of by Me, according to Order; and in the Morning Maſter *Evers* ſent him back with an Anſwer to Maſter *Vavaſor*, but Maſter *Evers* kept ſtill the Letters from Maſter *Harcourt*. And I did afterwards hear Maſter *Evers* and Maſter *Gavan* diſcourſe together touching the ſaid Letters, and in Commendation of the ſaid Advice, and they named ſeveral Friends in their diſcourſe that were engaged at *Paris*, whom I remember not. And Maſter *Evers* did tell me, that the Letters from Saint *Omers* were brought by a particular Gentleman into *England*, and from *London* to Maſter *Vavaſor* by ſome Friend, which I do the rather believe, for that I took notice, there was no Poſt-mark upon the ſaid Letter to Maſter *Vavaſor*.

That

That about *February* $167\frac{7}{8}$ there came a Letter to Mr. *Evers*, to acquaint him, from a Friend of his in *Paris*, that he had received a Letter from *Rome*, which did require the ſaid Mr. *Evers*, together with the ſaid *Cotton*'s Company in *London*, with Mr. *Gavans*, Mr. *Peters*, and Mr *Vavaſor*; And accordingly Mr. *Evers* did come to *London*, and Mr. *Peters*, but whether the other two were there I know not. And when Mr. *Evers* came home, he told me, Mr. *Ireland* and Mr. *Symonds* would be in the Country the latter end of *June*, for conſidering the beſt way and means for carrying on the great Work, as it was called. And in *July* 1678. I received a Letter from Mr. *Evers*, which came from Sir *John Warners*, to acquaint him that all the Arms were ready that were beſpoke, and wanted now nothing but their Orders how they ſhould be diſpoſed of.

In *Auguſt* following a Meeting was appointed at the Lord *Aſton*'s Houſe at *Tixall*, where was preſent the Lord *Aſton* himſelf, and my Lord *Stafford*, Sir *James Symonds*, Mr. *Dracott*, Mr. *Hevenyngham*, Mr. *Symonds*, Mr. *Ireland*, Mr. *Vavaſor*, Mr. *Gavan*, Mr. *Peter*, Mr. *Fitter*, Mr. *Fitzherbert*, and Mr. *Manley*, with ſeveral others; which Meeting was for carrying on the Plot, the Death of the KING, with ſeveral other things relating thereto. At that time it was Agreed, That the ſaid Lord *Aſton* and Sir *James Symonds* ſhould go beyond the Seas in the beginning of *October*, to diſpoſe of the Arms that were provided, but the Plot breaking out, their journey was ſtopt.

In *September* following my Lord *Stafford* ſent for me ſeveral times into his lodging Chamber at *Tixall*, where we had ſeveral private Conferences, amongſt which he told me, That Mr. *Evers* had com-

commended me to him, that I was true and truſty to any thing that I undertook, and that now was the time: That they ſtood in need of ſuch Men as I was: And that if I would I might make my ſelf happy; And if I would be one that would undertake to Kill the KING, he would give me Five Hundred Pounds for a preſent ſupply; which I faithfully promiſed I would do: And he told me I ſhould go up to *London* with him in *October*, and ſometimes I ſhould be at *Standon*, and ſometimes in *London*; And ſhould receive Inſtructions from Mr. *Harcourt*, Mr. *Ireland*, and himſelf. And going to Mr. *Evers* and acquainting him of it, he told me he knew of it before. I muſt renew my Oath of Secrecy, which I did do: And the Fourteenth of *October* I received a Letter from Mr. *Harcourt* for Mr. *Evers*; the Contents of which was, This night Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey* is diſpatcht. Sir, ſaid I to Mr. *Evers*, do you think that this will not deſtroy all our Deſigns? Sir ſaid I, if it do not deſtroy it I will be hang'd. Not ſo, ſaid *Evers*, be not ſo paſſionate, not ſo, for he was a man that did uſe to puniſh Lewd and Debaucht people; And it will rather be caſt on them, than any of us.

Another time I being in company with Mr. *Evers*, I preſſed of him, to know the reaſon why they ſhould Kill Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey*? He told me, That the Duke of YORK had ſent a Meſſage to *Coleman*, after he was taken, that he ſhould not Confeſs any thing: He returned the Duke an Anſwer back, That it had been his misfortune, to declare all that he knew of the Matter to Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey*; and he heard the ſaid Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey* would come in a Witneſs againſt him, in regard he had been ſo diligent in taking Examinations: The Duke returned him Anſwer back

again,

again, That bid him be ſure he did not Confeſs, and he ſhould not need to fear Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey*, and that there ſhould be care taken, or to that purpoſe. I ſaw a Letter from Mr. *Whitebread*, directed to Mr. *Evers*, but incloſed in *Groves* Letter to my ſelf, wherein was, That there was great hopes now, that things will go on well, if there be diligent care taken in the Management of it, which can never be, if it be communicated to every idle Fellow. Therefore be ſure you do not truſt any, but whom you have made tryal of: for if it ſhould be diſcovered, we both ruine our Deſign, and all concerned in it. For thoſe perſons which are for the People, no matter whether Gentlemen or not, ſo they be cunning, deſperate and truſty, which choice made here I fear not: for there hath been eſpecial care taken that no opportunity might be loſt; and what perſons you think fit, let me have your Anſwer next Week. Send to *Boſcobel*, and there will be a Meſſenger to bring them to me. I need not ſay much more to you, in regard you are fully acquainted with the buſineſs, and how it is to be carried on by Mr. *Ireland*. I hope you put the Gentlemen in mind, for the getting what Mony you can. Pray ſend me word by the next, how my Lady is. I think to be at St. *Omers* next week.

Thoſe Gentlemen that Subſcribed for carrying on this deſign about us in *Staffordſhire*, were as followeth, (*viz.*)

| | |
|---|---|
| Sir *James Symonds* ſubſcribed | 1000l |
| Mr. *Heveningham* | 2000l |
| Mr. *Dracot* | 3000l |
| Mr. *Gerrard* | 500l |
| Mr. *Howard* | 2000l |

And as Maſter *Evers* told me, my Lord *Aſton* paid One thouſand pound for carrying on this Deſign to Maſter *Bedingfield*: and that what was paid was returned towards the diſcharging the Accounts of Arms, which were provided beyond the Seas, and every of the aforeſaid Gentlemen was to have a ſhare, and Offices appointed. But in all our Meetings it was never agreed, what their parts ſhould be, and the Noteſt Gentlemen of all thoſe was ever Sir *James Symonds*, being as they ſaid, a very active perſon, and one that would be found a well qualified perſon. But as far as I ever underſtood, their places were to be appointed here in *London* by ſome of thoſe Great Ones whom I have formerly mentioned; but there are ſeveral perſons names, beſides thoſe I have named, in that ſame Liſt; and there are other perſons that entred their Names beyond Seas, for this Note was only for Maſter *Evers* private uſe. And to that end Maſter *Evers* and Maſter *Cotton* were ſent to Saint *Omers* about two or three years ago, for the ſake of other perſons which were very fearfull, and ſome others paid their money to Maſter *Bedingfield*, Maſter *Ireland*, Maſter *Harcourt*: and Maſter *Evers* hath been appointed to receive Acquittances for them; which Acquittances I have ſeen come in Maſter *Evers*

Letters,

Letters, one to Sir *James Symonds* at one time was for three hundred pound, which was noted in the Acquittance for a Charitable Uſe, but it was for the carrying on of this Wicked Deſign, or Maſter *Evers* told me not true. Moſt of the perſons about *Woolverhampton*, Maſter *Gavan* took care to receive of, and diſcharge them. I asked Maſter *Peter* how the reſt muſt be had, for theſe Gentlemen when they were all together, would be but a few. He Anſwered me, I need not fear, there was care taken for that, and ſuch a care, that at one hours warning they would be ready. But as he ſaid, they had formerly told, that none, except the Gentlemen, were ſo much as to tell one another, till the very time, of which I never enquired after that time, but I perceived that a great Number were knowing, by their fear when I was taken.

*Stephen Dugdale.*

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*FINIS.*